



DISASTER NEWS

Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses

Release Date: March 7, 2006
Release Number: SD 10356-01

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Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses

Sacramento, CA – Small, non-farm businesses in the South Dakota counties of **Butte, Meade, Lawrence** and **Pennington** and the Wyoming counties of **Crook** and **Weston** may apply for low interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans offset economic losses because of reduced revenues to farmers and ranchers caused by ongoing drought, late spring frosts, extreme heat, high winds, hail and prairie fires in Lawrence County, South Dakota beginning January 1, 2005, announced Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA's Field Operations Center - West.

Small businesses may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$1.5 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred. "Eligibility for these loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 4%, a maximum term of 30 years, and are restricted to small businesses without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship," Judd said.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Mike Johanns declared this disaster at the request of Governor Mike Rounds.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are ineligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.

For information and application forms call toll-free (800) 659-2955, or visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster. Hearing impaired individuals may call (800) 877-8339. Mail completed applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration at 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for these loans is **September 18, 2006**.

For more information visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster.

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